

State/Lake 'L' Station Will Become Wheelchair-Friendly

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The Chicago Transit Authority's above-ground 'L' station at State/Lake, which serves the Green, Pink, Orange, and Brown Lines, is scheduled to be completely reconstructed. The new station will get elevators that will make it wheelchair accessible and create an accessible transfer to the Lake Street Red Line subway station, located directly below the elevated stop. The original State/Lake station was built in 1895.

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning announced earlier this week that it is awarding \$56.9 million of the region's \$225.7 million allotment of federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds to the project.

A press release issued by the city of Chicago today noted that the station was the second busiest station on the elevated Loop tracks last year. The Chicago Department of Transportation is in charge of the project, as it has been for the recently constructed Cermak (Green Line), Morgan (Green/Pink), and Washington/Wabash elevated stations.

Like Washington/Wabash, the new State/Lake station will have wider platform than the facility it's replacing. State/Lake is notable for having very narrow stretches of platform near the station house.



The State/Lake station in 1982. Photo: C. William Brubaker/UIC Library collection

This is not the first time that the CTA or CDOT set a goal of redesigning or rebuilding the station. According to [Chicago "L".org](http://ChicagoL.org), in 1998 the CTA announced a plan to combine State/Lake, Madison/Wabash, and Randolph/Wabash. The latter two stations were combined into the new Washington/Wabash station which opened August 31 of this year. Later, CDOT expressed interest in building a new station next to the existing one, [Chicago "L".org](http://ChicagoL.org) says, which would have removed some obstruction of the views up and down State Street.



A view down State Street showing the station in the lower background, and before Trump Tower was built. Photo: 1227872_/Flickr

The \$56.9 million CMAQ grant won't cover the full cost of construction. The press release says "The full cost of the new station will not be determined until the design process progresses, but it is expected that it will exceed the construction cost of the new station at Washington/Wabash of \$75 million." The city previously won a \$5.5 million federal grant to bankroll the design of State/Lake.